

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are in this application and are presented for consideration. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 18.

Applicant has added new dependent claim 20 to highlight that the sealing element 15 keeps the shaft 10 of the ball pivot 1 at a radially spaced location from the connection component 11 and keeps the support ring 5 at an axial distance from the from connection component 11. This is clearly shown in Figures 1-4. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner favorably consider new dependent claim 20 as now presented.

The Office Action states that the title of the invention is not descriptive. Applicant has amended the title as shown above according to the Examiner's helpful suggestion.

Claims 1, 12, 14 and 18 have been objected to because of minor informalities. Applicant has amended the claims paying close attention to the Examiner's suggestions. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the helpful remarks.

Claim 10 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant has amended claim 10 to clarify that the profiled body forms a positive locking or a non-positive locking connection with the adjoining body. It is Applicant's position that claim 10 as now presented is clear and satisfies the requirements of the statute.

Claims 1-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Musashi Seimitsu (JP 402199317).

The present invention relates to a ball and socket joint. The ball and socket joint comprises a sealing element that has a portion located between a support ring and a connection component and another portion located between a shaft of a ball pivot and the connection element. This advantageously provides a double sealing feature that significantly reduces moisture and contaminants from entering the ball and socket joint. This dramatically increases the service life of the ball and socket joint since the double sealing feature prevents corrosion.

Musashi Seimitsu discloses a seal structure of a dust cover for a ball joint. The seal structure consists of a ring collar 13 having a flange section 15. The flange section 15 has a head section 28. The head section 28 is folded in such a way that the cross section from the center section in the peripheral direction to a position opposite to the spherical head section side to form a U-shape ring collar. A sealing member 27 is provided between the ring collar 13 and a connecting rod 18. The sealing member 27 is composed of plastic or rubber. The elastic force of the flange section 15 of the ring collar 13 prevents a gap from forming between the ring collar 13 and the connecting rod 18.

Musashi Seimitsu fails to teach and fails to suggest the combination of a sealing element that has one sealing portion arranged between a shaft of a ball pivot and a connection component in a radial direction of the ball pivot and another sealing portion arranged between a support ring and the connection component in an axial direction of the ball pivot. At most, Musashi Seimitsu discloses a sealing member 27 that is axially arranged between a ring collar 13 and a connecting rod 18. However, Musashi Seimitsu fails to teach that the sealing member 27 is radially arranged between the ball pivot and the connecting rod 18 as claimed. In contrast

to Musashi Seimitsu, a portion of the sealing element of the present invention is arranged between a support ring and a connection component and another portion of the sealing element is arranged between a shaft of a ball pivot and the connection component. This advantageously provides a double sealing feature that prevents moisture and other contaminants from entering the joint. This dramatically increases the service life of the ball and socket joint since corrosion of the ball and socket joint is significantly reduced. As clearly shown in Figure 1 and 3 of Musashi Seimitsu, the ball pivot is not sealed to the connecting rod 18 by the sealing member 27. As such, the prior art as a whole takes a different approach and fails to teach each feature of the claimed combination. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner favorably consider claims 1 and 14 as now presented and all claims that respectively depend thereon.

Favorable consideration on the merits is requested.

Respectfully submitted
for Applicant,



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Attached: Petition for One Month Extension of Time

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SHOULD ANY OTHER FEE BE REQUIRED, THE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
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